



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND REGENERATION</b>
Date and Time	<b>THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER 2020 COMMENCING AT 5 PM</b>
Venue	<b>VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)</b>
Present	CLLrs M Beston (Chairman), V Churchman, J Jones-Evans, J Medland, T Outlaw, C Quirk and S Smart
Also Present (Non voting)	CLLrs S Hastings, G Peace, I Ward
Officers Present	S MacDonald, C Ashman, J Brenchley, A Minns, P Thistlewood

1. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2020 be confirmed.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 4A as his wife was a Director of Visit Isle of Wight.

3. **Public Question Time - 15 Minutes Maximum**

There were no public questions received.

4. **COVID19 Response and Recovery**

4.1 **Visit Isle of Wight**

Will Myles from Visit Isle of Wight gave the Committee an overview of how the COVID pandemic had affected tourism and visitors to the island this year. Businesses had just opened after the winter period and then had to close for the lockdown. A marketing campaign which had been ready to start in March 2020 had to be withdrawn but would now be released later in the year. Some of the team had been furloughed and left only four staff to run Visit IW. All promotional messages had been withdrawn except 'the Island is Waiting' on social media. Some video presentations promoting the island were shown under the banner 'We're Good to

Go', including one showing businesses being COVID safe. The slogan had been adopted nationally. There was also to be a TV advertisement on Sky in relation to visiting the Isle of Wight.

£79,000 Cabinet Office funding had been obtained. The Isle of Wight had been awarded 'Best Holiday Destination and Best UK Beach Destination' by BBC Countryfile magazine.

In response to questions from members, Mr Myles explained that it was expected that seaside and coastal businesses over the next 6 months would reduce by 25 – 30%. National research indicated that some businesses may not survive the winter. Income was expected to be down by 35% compared with previous years.

Visit England had produced a 'sentiment tracker' showing that most people believed the worst was still to come, and there was a decrease in the number who thought the country would be back to normal by the end of the year. The document would be circulated to the Committee following the meeting.

The COVID restrictions were expected to affect half term visitors, particularly self-catering properties which would not be able to have groups of more than 6 people, although ferry bookings were looking busier in September and October than the same period in 2019.

The impact upon the tourism sector was noted together with the mitigating actions being taken to reduce these and support businesses wherever possible.

#### RESOLVED:

The impact on the tourism sector was noted together with the mitigating actions being taken to reduce this and support businesses wherever possible.

#### **4.2 IW Chamber of Commerce**

Steven Holbrook of the Chamber of Commerce gave an overview of what the chamber had been doing during the COVID pandemic. The chamber had been heavily involved with the British Chamber and other Chief Executives undertaking a national role to adapt to changing government policies, using case studies from the Island to influence those policies and had been involved in the introduction of the furlough scheme.

The chamber had worked with the council to ensure that grants coming from government had reached IW businesses, offering help to those who needed it, identifying gaps to inform the council where discretionary monies were needed.

There was an Assistance Hub providing help and advice for businesses.

The 50 plus scheme which had been operated with help from Age UK and the lottery ended in March and the council had stepped in to help.

From 1 October a mentoring scheme would be in place funded from the Regeneration budget, to grow businesses and create more jobs as business started to pick up.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) The Chamber be requested to circulate its assessment of the impact of Covid-29 on Island businesses.
- ii) The Chamber be congratulated on its work in providing support to Island businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**4.3 Isle of Wight Covid-19 Recovery Plan - Medium Term Plan to March 2022**

The Director of Regeneration summarised the recovery plan. He had been given the opportunity to brief Prince Edward during his recent visit to the island earlier in the week on the collaborative effort of all partners involved. The plan was based around the three pillars of recovery, these being; Community recovery, economic recovery and place recovery, and would need to remain flexible to adapt to changing circumstances, and be delivered by partnership working.

The Health and Wellbeing Board would become the overseeing body for progress against the plan as it had several partners, including a representative from the Island Economic Board. Members questioned whether it was realistic to build 50 new homes at Branstone Farm in the medium term, and an explanation was given that is was driven by available funding, with key milestones for delivery of the project. Homes England funding would be provided for the Housing Association partner.

**RESOLVED:**

The recovery plan and its implications in respect of regeneration was noted and the actions contained within it would be regularly monitored at future meetings of the Committee.

**5. Public Spaces Protection Orders - consultation**

The Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods summarised the results of the Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) consultation which had run from February 2020 and been extended to the end of June 2020 as a result of the COVID pandemic. The orders were for the control of dogs and alcohol in public places. Most were to replace the existing Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs) with the inclusion of some additional areas. There had been 1200 responses, and it was clear that a large percentage of respondents were in favour of the proposals. With regard to enforcement, it was clarified that Environmental Health and Neighbourhood Officer would enforce the orders in relation to dog control, whilst the order in relation to alcohol would be the responsibility of the police.

RESOLVED:

The Committee formally supported the proposed Public Spaces Protection Orders.

**6. Pavement Parking**

Members considered the government consultation paper entitled 'Pavement Parking – Options for Change' which could give local authorities powers to regulate pavement parking in their areas. It was agreed that in some narrow roads the inability to park on the pavement would cause obstruction and it would be a very difficult and contentious subject to address.

It was agreed that Traffic Revision Orders were currently very cumbersome and expensive to bring into force and that the proposals could simplify and speed up the procedure. The council would also have powers to declare non-pavement parking areas.

RESOLVED:

The Committee formally requested that the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure in his response to the Department for Transport's consultation on pavement parking should give support for a combination of option 1 – improvements to the existing traffic regulation order system, and option 2 – to allow local authorities with civil parking enforcement powers to enforce against "unnecessary obstruction of the pavement".

**7. Housing and Homelessness**

Cabinet had agreed the Homelessness Strategy at the end of 2019. Funding of £1 million had been received from MHCLG since January 2020, and £527,000 to address homelessness as a result of the COVID pandemic. The council was committed to ending rough sleeping and was continuing to build on recovery in the medium and long term, working to complete all outstanding actions in the action plan, and was hoping to achieve accreditation under the Self-Assessment Homelessness Reduction Act (SAHRA), which was a tool to measure effectiveness of prevention services.

The temporary ban on landlord evictions had ended but all new eviction notices must be for a six-month period. There was no information which suggested that eviction numbers would increase as a result of the pandemic, however this was being closely monitored.

RESOLVED:

The progress with the delivery of actions under the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping action plan was noted.

## 8. **Regeneration Strategy Update**

The Director of Regeneration updated the Committee on the current situation in relation to regeneration projects.

Some key construction had paused for a limited period due to the COVID pandemic but was now back on track. There had been clear interest shown by companies in the island as a place to invest, particularly with the proposed broadband infrastructure.

The Heritage High Street Action Zones had received funding of £1 million for Newport and Ryde, to improve shopfronts, provide housing and diversify uses of the high street over the next 4 years.

There had been an increasing interest in the concept of Place Plans. Cowes and Northwood had reactivated their consultation following lockdown, and East Cowes were also progressing with a Town Plan.

The planning committee had approved the Nicholson Road, Ryde, business park, including detailed permission for a community hub, subject to conditions related to road infrastructure. A Ryde East junctions study was due to take place and report in October 2020 which would help inform the timescale, cost and financing of road improvements. Funding bids would be submitted to support funding for improved infrastructure, along with a full business case for the phased development of the employment units.

The Branstone Farm project had been brought forward made possible by funding received. The council and its partners would lead by example on what was possible on the island.

The Newport Harbour Master plan was to be considered by Cabinet in November 2020.

### RESOLVED:

- a) The benefits from towns and parishes having place plans was noted and it was hoped that this could be encouraged in all areas without these.
- b) The Committee requested that further details regarding actions and timeframes for the Nicholson Road project be included in the report to the next meeting.
- c) It was noted that all relevant stakeholders would be provided with a copy of the strategic Ryde East junctions study.

## 9. **Committee's Work Plan**

The Committee reviewed its workplan. There were a number of items on the Forward Plan which were considered to be of relevance to the Committee. It was

agreed that engagement by all Committee members was important in helping to shape council policies.

RESOLVED:

- a) The Chairman indicated that the Scrutiny Officer would be sending out details of the proposed review on speed limits and requested that members respond with their views on this.
- b) The Committee, at its next meeting, would wish to look at the following two items shown in the forward plan for Cabinet :-
  - i. Beach Management Strategy
  - ii. Parking Delivery Plan

10. **Members' Question Time**

There were no Members' questions.

CHAIRMAN